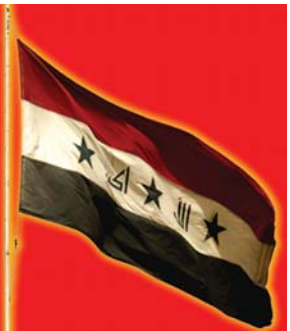




THIS WEEK IN IRAQ



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Soldiers graduate from basic training at Kirkush Military Training Base.

Iraqi Security Forces exceed 200K

Story and photo by Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq Public Affairs

INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD — The effort to train, equip and mentor Iraq's security forces hit a milestone recently, with the number of men and women serving in uniform stretching past 200,000.

Reaching this landmark is especially significant given that Iraq's military and police forces will be taking the lead in providing security for Saturday's referendum, officials said.

"We now have more than 60,000 additional Iraqi Security Forces available than there were for the highly-successful January election," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Fred Wellman, Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq public affairs officer. "This represents real momentum in building the security forces."

Since the effort to rebuild the country's forces began about 15 months ago, more than 115 special police and Army combat battalions have been formed with trained forces — recruits or prior military who have attended a formal military or police training program. Upon successful completion, members are issued the basic equipment needed to conduct their missions. The majority of those units are fighting side-by-side Coalition Forces and several dozen are taking the lead in operations, officials said.

Across Iraq every day, company and battalion size Iraqi units conduct independent and combined operations with Coalition Forces. There have been great strides and achievements seen over the past year by a growing security force in a time of war, said Lt. Col. Steven Boylan, director of the Combined Press Information Center here.

Other notable achievements include:

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A critical moment

By Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

Multi-National Force - Iraq Commanding General

A critical moment in the future of Iraq is about to be played out this Saturday as Iraqis vote on the constitutional referendum.

Whether Iraqi citizens vote for or against the current Constitution is of great importance no doubt. However, how Iraqis vote is less important than the fact that Iraqis actually vote for their future.

Every measure possible is being taken by the Iraqi government and the Multi-National Force - Iraq to ensure a safe referendum. As of this week there are 200,000 Iraqi Security Force (ISF) and 115 ISF combat battalions in the fight across Iraq. This translates into a 50 percent increase in the ISF available for security compared to last January's election. As a matter of fact, the 6th Iraqi Army recently assumed battle space and the lead for tactical operations in Baghdad. Curfews, weapons bans and key border crossing closures are being implemented to ensure the safety of voters. At the designated polling centers themselves, Iraqi police and Iraqi Army elements will provide security to ensure everyone gets a chance to vote.

Insurgents around the country are on the run, and recent operations in the Euphrates River Valley around Haditha and the Qaim region have removed terrorist safe havens allowing voters to reach the polls safely. To be sure, historical trends say there will be a spike in violence prior to the referendum. The insurgents continue to offer only the murder of innocent people, while the Coalition offers a democratic choice. Indications across the country show Iraqis are increasingly confident in the security situation as evidenced by the fact that 88 percent of Iraqis polled said they intended to vote in the upcoming election, 98 percent of eligible voters are registered to vote, and since April more than 3,700 actionable tips have been received on the National Tips line providing information about caches and insurgents.

Having the desire to cast a vote and feeling safe and secure in doing so is paramount to the democratic process. The security stage is set ... the world looks forward to the outcome.



Gen. George W. Casey Jr.



The mayor of Multaka, Abu Saef, and Hawayja Mayor Amir Abdullah Mohammed, condemn Zarqawi and terrorists, at the West Province leader meeting in Kirkuk.

Civic leaders condemn Zarqawi, terrorists

By 116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK — Leaders from West Kirkuk Province condemned Zarqawi and all terrorists, Oct. 3, at the West Province leader meeting in Kirkuk.

The weekly meetings of leaders from western Kirkuk Province are dominated by two topics: the constitutional referendum and security within the province. These leaders acknowledged how much better off Kirkuk Province is than almost any other province when it comes to security.

Abu Saef, mayor of Multaka, who co-chaired the Oct. 3 meeting with Amir Abdullah Mohammed, mayor of Huwayjah, made it clear

what kind of stand the leaders should be taking.

"We condemn Zarqawi and all the terrorists and what they are doing," Saef said. "We are totally against them."

The constitutional referendum is crucial to establishing Iraq's legitimacy in the eyes of the world community, and all Iraqis are being encouraged to vote.

Meanwhile, Iraqi and Coalition security forces in coordination are preparing to provide polling site security for the voting public. Iraqi authorities encourage community members to contact their local Joint Coordination Center with any information regarding terrorist or criminal activities at: Daquq 650-039, Kirkuk 104 or 115 or 213-333, Huwayjah (50) 744-121, Dibis (050)732-982, Altun Kupri (050)-772-360 and Sulaymaniyah 100.

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Iraqi Army takes control of four more Baghdad districts

**Story and photos by
Spc. Derek Del Rosario**
Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — The Iraqi Army reached another historic milestone when the 6th Iraqi Army Division took over authority of the Kharkh, Rusafa, Thawra and Adhamiyah districts of Baghdad from Task Force Baghdad during a ceremony at the Muthana Airfield Oct. 3.

Iraqi Army Maj. Gen. Mahmoud Mohammad Khalaf al-Shumali, 6th IA Div. commander, raised the division's flag, signifying the assumption of authority and another step toward taking control of their own country.

During his speech, Mahmoud expressed confidence in his division and its ability to secure the Baghdad area.

"It is a great opportunity and a great event that we have been given the honor to receive responsibility of our units in these areas," he said.

"Our beloved Baghdad and its people should feel safe with our units responsible for their safety. We pledge to do our best to serve our people and to reconstruct our country."



A 6th Iraqi Army Division Soldier renders honors.



A parade of Iraqi Army Soldiers marches past the reviewing stand during an assumption of authority ceremony Oct. 3 at Muthana Airfield.

Maj. Gen. William G. Webster, Task Force Baghdad and 3rd Infantry Division commander, also participated in the ceremony and said he feels the transfer marks a significant chapter in the future of Iraq.

"Today is a great day for the Iraqi Army as the Baghdad Division assumes control of two of its brigades and begins to transition the security of Baghdad," Webster said.

"It signals that eventually the Iraqi Army will once again control the security of its country."

The assumption of authority observance included drill and ceremony demonstrations by the 6th IA Div., where IA Soldiers marched past their commander on the reviewing stand.

"You can see in their eyes the pride that swells as these men take security of their own city," Webster said.

"We have been working hard to this day so the Iraqi Army can take control of this part of Baghdad. It's a great step and will only strengthen the relationship between us."

Iraqi Soldiers getting a second chance to walk

**Story and Photo by Spc.
Ashly E. Mitchell**
366th Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE COURAGE — Two Iraqi Army Soldiers will be offered a new chance to walk after being severely injured by an improvised explosive device (IED) during a convoy.

One Soldier had both of his legs amputated mid-thigh level, and the other had his lower left leg amputated just below the knee.

Both men were flown to Baghdad to an Iraqi Rehabilitation Prosthetics Center.

"This center, which caters to

Iraqi military and civilians, will provide them with prosthetic limbs, rehabilitation and other medical treatment as needed," said Maj. Michael Rossman, brigade surgeon, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. (Light)

"This center is great because it's Iraqis taking care of Iraqis," he said.

According to Rossman, the travel was coordinated with Iraqi Security



An Iraqi Soldier who lost his lower left leg in an IED attack will receive rehabilitation in Baghdad.

Forces to get them from Al Kindi to Forward Operating Base Courage. They were then airlifted by Coalition Forces to Baghdad.

"I'm very proud of everyone I work with. We're a big team, but we're also a big family," said Capt. Jake Roberts, Officer in

Charge of FOB Courage Aid Station.

"We weren't the only people involved when it comes to saving these Soldiers."

After the IED strike, the two IA Soldiers were treated on the scene of the incident by Soldiers of the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, Stryker Brigade Combat Team, and then they were transported to the aid station.

The IA Soldiers were treated with tourniquets so they could be evacuated by helicopter to the 228th Combat Support Hospital on Logistics Support Area Diamondback.

"These two Soldiers have somewhat of a happy ending," said Roberts.

"This is a wonderful program to help these Soldiers get prosthetics."

Iraqi police deliver supplies to three local schools

Story and photo by 116th
Brigade Combat Team
Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK

— Iraqi police officers and Coalition Soldiers distributed over 600 student packets and 46 teacher packages to three Kirkuk-area elementary schools Sept. 28 as part of Operation Provide School Supplies.

Iraqi police from the Yaychi and Arapha stations and 116th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers from Headquarters Platoon, Troop E, Task Force



Bajawan Elementary School girls line up to receive student packets courtesy of Operation Provide School Supplies.

2/116 Armor delivered the supplies during morning visits to the Al-Awa, Bajawan and Erwa Bin Alward Elementary Schools.

“The police officers enjoyed this opportunity to interact with the children,” said Staff Sgt. Jerry Losing, a Troop E Soldier who helped with the deliveries. “The children were well behaved and appreciative. The teachers seemed very appreciative also.”

OPSS items are donated and shipped to Iraq by individuals and organizations in the United States. Once the supplies arrive in Iraq, Coalition Soldiers package them into standard packages and deliver them to local

authorities for distribution.

A typical student package contains color markers or pencils, crayons, pencils, pens, a ruler, scissors, an eraser, a pencil sharpener, glue, writing paper, construction paper and a coloring book. Teacher packets include a larger quantity of supplies and teacher-specific items like highlighters, staplers and red pens.

Through the OPSS program, the 116th BCT is providing needed supplies to teachers and students and is also helping local Iraqi Security Forces gain the trust and confidence of citizens.

Security Forces — *from page 1*

- Seven basic police academies training more than 3,500 monthly in 10-week courses. Seven additional regional academies that will provide sustainment training are on the way.
- Four Special Border Force Battalions trained and patrolling the Syrian and Jordanian borders in western Anbar Province.
- Twenty-eight provincial SWAT teams trained and equipped, with another currently being trained.
- More than \$2 billion committed to construction and reconstruction projects for the ISF, to include four multi-brigade installa-

tions, hundreds of police stations and border forts, headquarters and barracks facilities, training centers and operating bases.

- More than 335 million rounds of ammunition distributed to the ISF since July 1, 2004, along with 166,000 handguns, 186,000 AK-47 assault rifles, 9,900 machine guns, 222,000 sets of body armor, 20,100 vehicles, 142,000 helmets and 30,300 radios.

In addition to equipping, training and mentoring the Iraqi Security Forces, MNSTC-I is now overseeing the development of Iraq's Defense and Interior ministries. As of Oct. 1, the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO) teams for the two ministries falls

under MNSTC-I's jurisdiction, joining the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT), Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT) and the Joint Headquarters Advisory Team.

“MNSTC-I now owns the process of developing the Iraqi Security Forces,” said U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, MNSTC-I commander. “From the foot soldier and policeman, all the way up to the ministries. One organization has a total view of the entire process.”

Dempsey believes force generation and operations at the tactical level are going well, but the challenge now is to focus on the higher levels and to strengthen the systems needed to support and sustain units.

Iraqi Soldiers launch successful raid in Sadr City



Staff Sgt. William Council, HHC, 3/15 Infantry, examines bomb-triggering devices found during the raid.

Story and photo by Spc. Ben Brody
2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

SADR CITY — In a lightning-fast pre-dawn operation, Iraqi Army and Task Force Baghdad Soldiers raided the homes of two notorious terrorists in Sadr City Oct. 6.

An elite Iraqi Army Strike Platoon took the lead during the operation. Other IA Soldiers set up an outer cordon making sure terrorists did not escape.

One of the suspected terrorists was known for emplacing roadside bombs and conducting rocket-propelled grenade attacks on Coalition Forces. He reportedly received a car for shooting

down a U.S. Army helicopter last year.

The other suspected terrorist was known as “The Engineer” for his expertise in manufacturing and emplacing bombs. The raid also uncovered a cache of bomb-triggering devices.

“The raid shows the capability of the Iraqi Army Battalion to plan and execute a complex mission,” said Capt. Zan Hornbuckle, a U.S. Army company commander who works with the Iraqi Army. “They’re totally competent at the squad and platoon levels, and getting better at the company level.

“They did a great job — everything went really smoothly,” Hornbuckle added. “It gives the Iraqi Soldiers confidence in their capabilities to pull off such a complex mission flawlessly.”



Heroes of the Week

Marine helps comfort wounded warriors

Story and photo by Sgt. Jason Mikeworth
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD — Marine Lt. Col. Ronald Guilliams, a liaison officer with the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, is helping rebuild the morale of Iraqi Soldiers wounded while fighting to rebuild their country.

Guilliams has spearheaded a drive to provide a wide variety of comfort items to the wounded soldiers being treated at the Air Force hospital at Logistical Support Area Anaconda.

While checking on the status of wounded Marines at the hospital, Guilliams began making lists of items the hospital staff told him were in short supply. He said he coordinated with his wife, Denise Guilliams, and Simpson United Methodist Church in Evansville, Ind., to send things like blankets, pillows and T-shirts.

"These items are for any human being in need," Guilliams said.

Among the items available are T-shirts, flip-flops, snacks and some children's toys. Hygiene products and underwear are also on hand for wounded Soldiers in need.



Marine Lt. Col. Ronald Guilliams speaks to Pfc. Tamara Aponte at the Air Force Theater Hospital at LSA Anaconda.

"They really love the Beanie Babies," he said.

Sometimes the cultural differences and language barrier can cause anxiety among the wounded Iraqi Soldiers.

"They're in a totally different environment. They're used to an Iraqi world, and all of a sudden they're in a hospital with stuff strapped to them, and they're injured," said Guilliams. Passing out small items like chocolate chip cookies can go a long way to easing the situation, he added.

"It really smoothes things out a bit," Guilliams said.

Since the first donations were received in July, Guilliams' efforts have spread across the county. He said his daughter, Kristen Dubinksi, has started a group in San Jose, Calif., among her friends and church mem-

bers to donate items. Her in-laws in Elk Grove, Ill., have also started a group.

"This is my way to try to get people back home to help how they could," Guilliams said.

Kaczmarek provides link between Coalition, Iraqi Army

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux
207th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

TAJI — One day, he was the night shift battle captain for the 46th Corps Support Group (46th CSG); the next day he became the liaison officer between 46th CSG and the 1st Motorized Transportation Regiment (1st MTR) of the Iraqi Army.

Capt. David J. Kaczmarek, a logistics officer from Fort Bragg, N.C., had to adapt to his new job fast. "I was called in the office, and I was told, 'This is what your mission is; this is what you are supposed to do.' And I had it from there. It made the deployment go by a lot quicker than I thought it was going to," he said.

Kaczmarek is a vital link between the 46th CSG, the 1st MTR and a Military



Capt. David J. Kaczmarek, liaison officer between the 46th CSG and the 1st MTR, shakes hands with a Soldier he assisted with coordinating a mission.

Integration Training Team assigned to coach the MTR. Kaczmarek works 12 to 14 hours a day, juggling phone calls, meetings and seeing visitors, and occasionally he accompanies the 1st MTR on longer missions, to make sure everything goes as planned and to be on hand should any issues arise. He is a one-man office,

taking care of every little thing related to the cooperation between 1st MTR and the U.S. forces.

Kaczmarek seems full of enthusiasm and energy. After working in the office and running around all day, he still spends over two hours in the gym lifting weights, followed by running a couple of miles outside.

He enjoys his job and will return to Fort Bragg with lots of memories, he said.

"What is funny is that the majority of Iraqi Soldiers have the same issues as American Soldiers."

He said the hardest part of his job was breaking down the cultural barriers, and making a strong point about how important training is in successfully accomplishing any mission. "That was what our goal was, and striving to it was difficult, but at the end it was rewarding," he said.



Heroes of the Week

Iraqi Army Imam delivers supplies to orphanage

Story by Capt. Monte Hibbert
Task Force Liberty Public Affairs

KIRKUK — The Imam for the Iraqi Army delivered supplies to the Tesin Orphanage in Kirkuk on Oct. 3.

Iraqi Army Imam Kasraw had the pleasure of delivering a variety of supplies provided by Task Force Liberty's 116th Brigade Combat Team and communities in the United States to the orphanage children.

The donated school supplies included erasers, pencils, notebook paper and coloring books, as well as some clothes for the children.

Playground equipment for the children was built by Sgt. Fenton Doyle of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 2/116 Armor.



Courtesy photo

The Imam of the Iraqi Army delivers school supplies and clothing to children at the Tesin Orphanage in Kirkuk.

The unit also went shopping on the local economy for cleaning supplies, shampoo, bar soap, juices, frozen chickens, chicken nuggets and hot dogs.

Most of the donated supplies came from families and businesses in Idaho.

The Iraqi Army Chaplain, Imam Kasraw, met with his partner from the Task Force 2/116th Chaplain, 1st Lt. Ross and was pleased to receive the mission to assist with the welfare of the orphanage.

Imam Kasraw and the Soldiers and officers in the 4th Iraqi Army Division's 2nd Brigade showed great interest and were excited

about watching over the care of the kids and involvement in support of the orphanage.

Iraqi Army forces chase attackers to large cache

By Maj. Richard Goldenberg
Task Force Liberty Public Affairs

TIKRIT — Iraqi Army Soldiers uncovered information leading to a possible al Qaeda terror cell encampment when they followed a lead to the discovery of a large weapons cache near Ghalibiyah in Diyala Province at 12:30 a.m. Oct 3.

The cache was discovered after the 5th Iraqi Army Division Soldiers were attacked while on a combat patrol.

The troops returned fire and pursued their attackers to two large farmhouses in the area west of Ba'qubah.

Iraqi Soldiers requested additional assistance from Task Force Liberty's 3rd Brigade Combat Team and a joint raid was conducted.

A search of the properties yielded two vehicles prepared as improvised explosive devices (propane tanks with TNT), one suicide bomber vest, 19 57 mm rockets, 18 anti-tank rockets, 16 rocket-propelled grenades, two RPG launchers, 10 anti-tank mines, 20 mortar rounds, 25 mortar fuses,



Items recovered from the successful Iraqi Army raid near Ba'qubah included the seizure of al Qaeda propaganda, munitions and a suicide vest. The items are part of the Iraqi Army and Task Force Liberty's Operation Saratoga.

three machine guns, two AK-47 rifles, and 4 hand grenades.

Also found was an Iraqi army uniform, two Al-Qaeda flags, an Al-Qaeda flier, and terrorist propaganda book and miscellaneous medical equipment.

Task Force Liberty explosive ordnance disposal personnel conducted a controlled



blast to destroy the munitions.

Although the attackers initially escaped, the Iraqi Soldiers reported the engagement to the area Joint Coordination Center where Iraqi Security Forces later apprehended the suspected terrorists at the Khalis Hospital.

The two were receiving medical treatment for wounds received during the failed attack of the Iraqi patrol.

"This operation demonstrates how well the Iraqi Army is diligently pursuing, capturing and killing the AIF in order to protect all Iraqi citizens," said Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, commander of the 42nd Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty.

Forward Operating Bases being turned over to Iraqis

By Pfc. Joshua R. Ford
Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY — Coalition Forces in Iraq are turning over forward operating bases (FOBs) across the country to Iraqi authorities, empowering the people to fight terrorism and help the Iraqi security forces to become self-sustaining.

So far 27 bases have successfully been turned over. Fifteen of those bases are under ISF control, and 12 are under the control of the Ministries of the Interior or Finance and private land owners.

"Bases are transferred back to the Iraqi Government [when] they are no longer needed by Coalition Forces. In many cases, as Iraqi Security Forces are stood up and become capable of independent operations, we transfer a base to them to operate out of and handle the security of that particular area of operations," said Col. Jeffrey S. Weissman, chief, Base Closure Division, MNF-I DCS Resource and Sustainment.

Before the Coalition forces turn over a FOB three key factors are taken into con-

sideration, said Maj. Michael Davidson, plans officer, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, N.C.

These factors are ISF's ability to hold battle space, the overall stability of the area and the funding approved for base consolidation in support of the MNF-I campaign plan.

Once those factors are cleared there is a 100-day process that takes place. The process includes Coalition Forces cleaning the base, making sure there are no environmental issues and verifying who the rightful owner of the land is, Davidson said.

The departments that play a key role in completing the process are the Coalition's logistics, operations and engineering departments along with resource management and Kellogg, Brown and Root, Inc.

The base transfer process is a team effort between MNF-I, MNC-I, Multi-National Security Transition Command -

Iraq, the State Department and the Iraqi Government. The process fully supports the MNF-I Command Plan and is integral in supporting the Iraqi Government's road to self-reliance, said Weissman.

"Soldiers have been doing an amazing job turning over bases. It's a lot of work closing down a base back in the states.

Just think about closing a base while running combat operations in a war zone," said Davidson.

Forward Operating Base Danger is in the process of being turned over to the ISF. It will be the

biggest base turnover Coalition Forces and ISF have completed, Davidson added.

All of the bases will eventually be turned over, Davidson said.

"Our ultimate goal is to facilitate and enable the development of the Iraqi Security Forces so that they will be capable of providing a safe and secure environment in a free and democratic Iraq," said Weissman.

"Our ultimate goal is to facilitate and enable the development of the Iraqi Security Forces so that they will be capable of providing a safe and secure environment in a free and democratic Iraq."

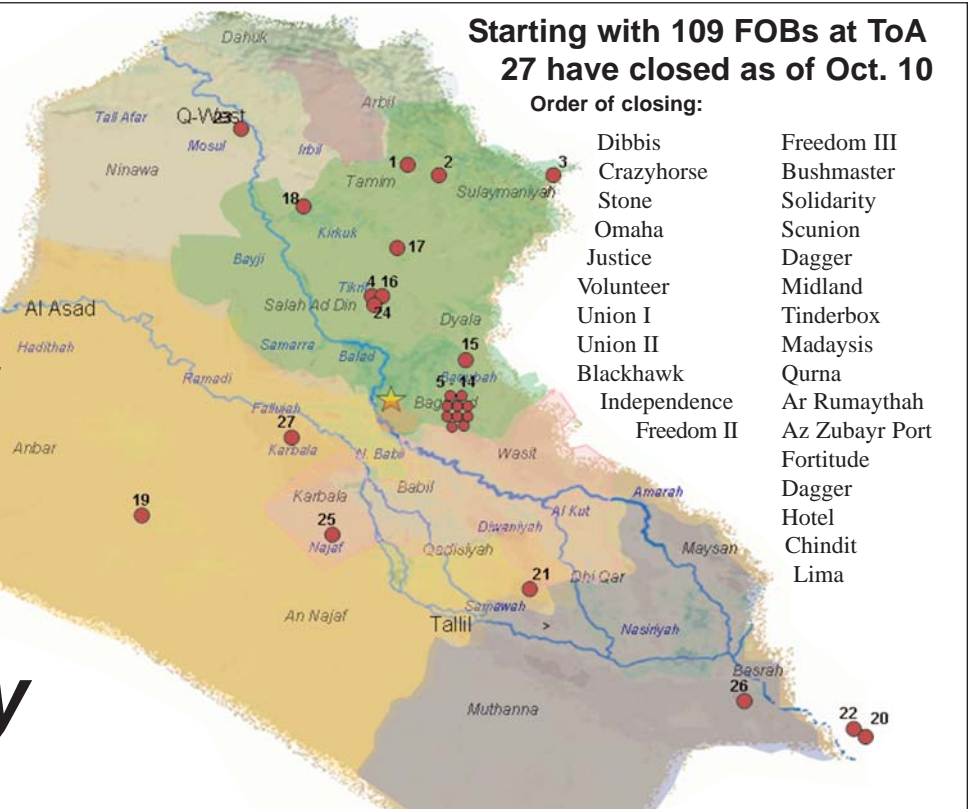
Col. Jeffrey S. Weissman, chief, Base Closure Division, MNF-I DCS Resource and Sustainment

**Forward
Operating
Bases
transferred
since
Transition
of Authority**

**Starting with 109 FOBs at ToA
27 have closed as of Oct. 10**

Order of closing:

Dibbis	Freedom III
Crazyhorse	Bushmaster
Stone	Solidarity
Omaha	Scunion
Justice	Dagger
Volunteer	Midland
Union I	Tinderbox
Union II	Madaysis
Blackhawk	Qurna
Independence	Ar Rumaythah
Freedom II	Az Zubayr Port
	Fortitude
	Dagger
	Hotel
	Chindit
	Lima





Coalition, Iraqi Security Forces

Operations Review



By Staff Sgt. Julie Nicolov
Multi-National Corps – Iraq
Public Affairs

Members of the Iraqi Security Forces are recruiting, patrolling and providing the security for the upcoming referendum vote this week and ultimately for the future of their country.

Of the total number of operations conducted in Iraq from May to September, 25 percent were conducted independently by Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). The remaining operations were conducted by combined teams of ISF and Coalition Forces (CF).

"The ISF is key to making the process work," said Lt.

Col. Patrick Stevens, operations planner, Multi-National Corps - Iraq. "The people will know without a doubt that the country is safe for them to go out and vote."

In Tall Afar, CF and ISF troops encounter minimal enemy contact as they assist the humanitarian aid and reconstruction efforts of Operation Restoring Rights.

Eventually, CF and ISF will leave the city, and Tall Afar police will take over security. Police are recruiting and training new additions to their force.

"Since late September, Iraqi police have approved approximately 300 people from Tall Afar," said Lt. Col. Bruce Parker, assistant chief of operations, MNC-I.

Iraqi Police throughout the country are growing in ability every day.

"There are successes all around," said Lt. Col. Michael Moore, deputy ISF chief, MNC-I. "They are in the lead out west, in Fallujah and in Baghdad."

In Baghdad alone, Iraqi Special Police Commandos and CF troops conducted a series of raids Oct. 6 that netted 34 suspected terrorists.

Operation River Gate in western Iraq is dedicated to securing the cities of Haditha, Barwana



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Kevin N. McCall

Marines from Co. K, 3rd Bn., 1st Marine Regiment, and Iraqi Soldiers patrol the streets of Haditha in search of terrorists and terrorist activities. 2nd Marine Division is deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to conduct counter-insurgency operations to neutralize anti-Iraqi forces.

and Haqlaniyah, capturing insurgents and their weapons caches. ISF is a crucial element in that operation.

"In each of the cities, CF battalions are partnered with ISF battalions to interrupt the enemy's ability to move freely among the three cities that they thought were their sanctuaries," said Maj. Brandon Robbins, operations officer, Multi-National Corps - Iraq.

Combined operations captured seven insurgents and a large weapons cache at a school in Ramadi Oct. 4.

The cache contained a variety of rifles and machine guns with ammunition, military and electronic equipment, a large number of mortar rounds, various explosives and a wide assortment of improvised explosive device-making materials.

According to Robbins, the cache contained enough materials to outfit dozens of vehicle-borne IEDs.

In Haditha, Iraqi Special Operations Forces found an IED factory behind a

mosque. They also found an AIF safe house full of anti-Coalition propaganda-making material.

After the cities are secure, Operation River Gate will begin humanitarian and reconstruction projects similar to those of Operation Restoring Rights, which is in its final stages in Tall Afar.

"It's going well," Robbins said. "As in Tall Afar, our goal is to emphasize to the population that we are here to eliminate the anti-Iraqi forces and, with the assistance of IA and Iraqi Transitional Government, to jump start the area for a safe and secure environment for the election period."

In the Al Qaim area on the Syrian border, combined forces swept the area of insurgents in a similar operation named Iron Fist.

Fifty-five AIF were killed and 10 were detained in the six-day operation.

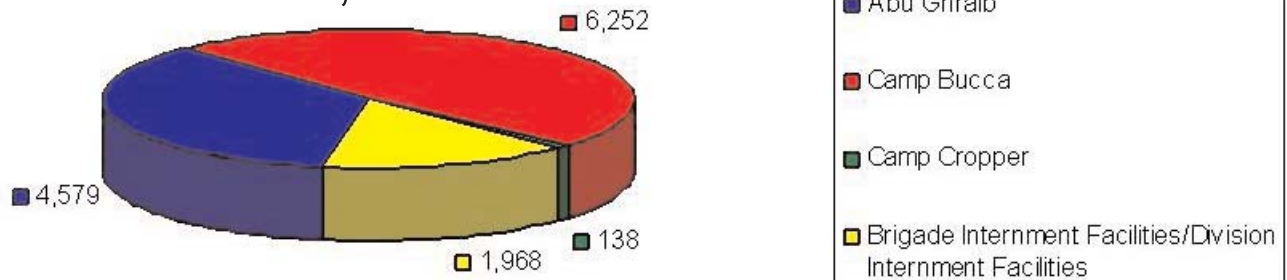
Two battle positions, Iwo Jima and Chosin, were built as part of the operation to house



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Bobby J. Segovia
In Al Taqaddum, Specialist 1st Class Semir Halilovic, an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician with the Bosnia and Herzegovina Army, cuts into a roll of C-4 placed around live 130 mm projectile shells to set a detonation wire. Bosnia and Herzegovina Soldiers are deployed alongside 2nd Force Service Support Group in Iraq.

See OPERATIONS, next page

Multi-National Force - Iraq detainee population as of Oct. 8 – 13,225



Operations

from previous page

and support the Iraqi Army (IA) troops who will eventually take responsibility of patrolling the Syrian border.

"IA will have positive and complete control over their borders," Robbins said.

The two operations were designed to saturate the area with well-trained and battle-proven ISF troops who will control the routes most commonly used by insurgents to travel to Mosul, Baghdad and other hot spots throughout the country.

Coalition leaders on the ground have faith in the ISF's ability to protect Iraq. "It was quoted from a Special Forces advisor of an Iraqi Army battalion that



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Shane S. Keller

Battalion commander Lt. Col. Robert R. Kosid and Sgt. Maj. Bryan P. Ward, battalion sergeant major from 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Bn. patrol through a palm grove near a market in Barwana.

"they are as good as any American conventional infantry battalion," Stevens said.

ISF, under the leadership of Iraq's

Ministry of the Interior, will take the lead on security measures during the referendum Saturday.

"The referendum is very important," said the Iraqi Army chief of operations, a colonel who chooses not to disclose his name for security reasons. "Then, we will have a constitution and law for the country."

They will also be responsible for election day security, but their duties will not end Dec. 15. "It's not only for the elections, but through the elections," Stevens said. "They will provide security before, during and after to eliminate any terrorist acts."

Parker believes that with current security measures and the referendum vote, the future of Iraq is looking bright and safe.

"The security situation in Iraq improves daily," Parker said. "The al Qaeda of Iraq are like rats with their backs against the wall ... they are fighting for survival."

Construction started on the \$86.6 million Countrywide Automatic Monitoring and Control Systems project, in the Baghdad Governorate. This project rehabilitates the Ministry of Electricity's communication and control systems at 150 locations. When completed this system monitors and controls the national grid, allowing the Ministry of Electricity to run the grid efficiently, safely and with the transparency to quickly identify problem areas. The Iraqi subcontractor will average 350 to 500 Iraqi workers daily on the project.

Construction is complete on the \$494,000 permanent Vehicle Checkpoint, in Qal'at Saleh District, Missan Governorate. The project included design and construction of a vehicle checkpoint, with two blast-protected vehicle inspection pads, two security buildings, and concrete perimeter walls. This project increases the security of Al Amarah by controlling traffic flow through town and providing a secure area for police to inspect vehicles for weapons and explosives.

Iraqi border control academy ready for training

By Polli Keller

Gulf Region North
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

MOSUL — The Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) Academy is now complete and ready to train Iraqi guards to protect their country's borders.

Working together, the Iraqi Province of Sulaymaniyah, Ministry of Interior, an Iraqi construction company and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have finished the \$17.2 million facility. Officials turned over the academy to the Iraqi government in July, so they could start training the border guards.

Construction and renovations of this facility include classrooms, administrative facilities, barracks, dining and maintenance facilities along with complete water, sewer and electrical systems. It is the only facility of its type in the province with potable running water and a state-of-the-art dining facility.

According to Col. Richard Jenkins,

USACE Gulf Region North commander, the Sulaymaniyah DBE Academy is one of three academies operated by the Ministry of the Interior for the principal purpose of training recruits and serving members of the Iraqi border police. The other two academies are located in Wasit Province (in Al Kut) and in Basrah Province (in Shaibah). The objective of these academies is to train sufficient new recruits to reach the DBE staffing goal of more than 28,000. At present, the total DBE strength stands at more than 17,000.

This academy will employ numerous officers, teachers, more than 800 trainees, and several civilians working as cooks and maintenance personnel. An American company and an Iraqi subcontractor worked together to build this facility. More than 300 local workers were employed during the construction.

The commander of the Multi-National Force - Iraq considers effectively controlling the borders of the nation of Iraq to be



Courtesy photo

The academy's state of the art kitchen is the only one of its kind in the province.

his top priority, said Jenkins. "The importance of the Academy are the recruits that this academy trains. They are critical to the accomplishment of CG MNF-I's top priority of border security."

Accomplishing the DBE staffing goal, along with the construction and equipping of 254 new border forts and fielding an effective, nationwide command and control system, will help to carry out this goal.

The USACE Sulaymaniyah Resident Office manages construction and renovation of several primary and secondary schools, clinics, and electrical substations. Currently, 49 new constructions and 12 renovation projects are ongoing in the region.

Construction is complete on the \$200,000 outpatient clinic project in the Karkh District, Baghdad Governorate. The clinic has eight screening and treatment rooms and houses audiology, dermatology, optometry and gynecology services.

Beer al Saba, Tahreer School Renovations

Noor al Qaim Company has the contracts to renovate these primary schools. Work on Beer Al Saba School under a \$92,000 contract started Aug. 14 and should be completed Saturday. About 15 are on the crew. That work includes roof repairs and painting. Work is finished on the \$57,000 contract to renovate Al Tahrer School. Construction there started Aug. 14 and finished Sept. 13. About 12 Iraqis are part of the crew involved in roof repairs and painting renovations.



Kirkuk leaders sign \$8.1 M in water infrastructure improvement contracts

By 116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK

— Local government, business and Coalition leaders gathered at the Kirkuk Government Building Oct. 4 to sign contracts worth \$8.1 million in water infrastructure improvement projects, a move expected to increase Kirkuk City water capacity more than 13 times and provide potable water to another 25,000 people in the rural western portion of the province.

Contracts signed included improvements to the Dibbis



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Monte Hibbert

Contract representatives and Kirkuk officials sign \$8.1 million in contracts at the Kirkuk Government Building for water infrastructure improvements.

High-lift Pump Station and construction of a water system for Sin Al Thebban, a rural area near Hawijah.

“Today’s event marked the signing of the top two projects on a list of many approved

water improvement projects in Kirkuk Province,” said Lt. Col. Steve Knutzen, the 116th Brigade Combat Team officer facilitating economic development in the area.

According to Knutzen, the Sin Al Thebban project will bring drinking water to 25,000 people, and the Dibbis High-lift Pump Station project will increase water flow to Kirkuk City from 2 million gallons per day

(MGD) to 28 MGD.

The contacts were signed by the contractor representatives, Kirkuk Governor Abdulrhaman Mustafa, Kirkuk Director General of Water Abdul Hadar Hassan and Kirkuk Provincial Council Chairman Rizgar Ali.

Working to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Kirkuk by helping improve basic services is one way the 116th Brigade Combat Team is helping Iraqi citizens as they establish the foundations of the new Iraq. The 116th BCT is performing a four-fold mission in Kirkuk Province including training and supporting Iraqi Security Forces, helping Iraqis improve their local economy, assisting their new government and improving their communications.



Al Rasheed Primary Healthcare Center

Parsons Company has the \$593,000 contract to build this two-story 1,155 square meter primary healthcare center in al Rasheed, Baghdad Province.

Construction started Oct. 31, 2004, with an expected completion date of Nov. 14, 2005. Currently the project is 85 percent finished.

About 50 Iraqi employees are working on the project on such tasks as pouring the side walkway for the building, placing mosaic tiling on the first floor, finishing plastering and installing ceramic tile, stone work and porcelain tiles. About 90 to 95 percent of the ductwork is finished. This facility will provide space for medical and dental examination and treatment with space including medical and dental x-ray capabilities, vaccination, testing laboratory, pharmacy and public education.



Construction started on the \$758,000 Tarmiya Substation Feeder project, Baghdad District, Baghdad Governorate. This 33kv project is one of five feeder projects in a complete electrical grid system that brings power from the larger 132kv substations to smaller 33/11kv substations, providing low voltage for distribution to homes and businesses. Approximately 35,000 residents of the Tarmiya section of Baghdad will benefit from this project.



Photos courtesy Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq

An Iraqi Navy patrol boat prepares for a mission in Um Qasr.



Iraqis taking the lead



Members of the 1st Mechanized Battalion, 1st Mechanized Brigade, 9th Mechanized Division gear up for a mission.



An Iraqi T-55 tank crew chats with children while on patrol in Taji.



An Iraqi C-130 and its crew wait for a mission at Baghdad International Airport.